

~~TOP SECRET~~

COMOR-D-13/39  
Revised

5 April 1965

MEMORANDUM FOR: Committee on Overhead Reconnaissance

SUBJECT: Sea Surveillance by Satellite

1. The attached memorandum submitted by the Navy is a substitute for that previously forwarded to you under our covering memorandum of 2 March. This memorandum was recalled on 8 March 1965.

2. It is requested that you review the Navy proposal. It will be scheduled for discussion at an early COMOR meeting.

25X1

Executive Secretary  
Committee on Overhead Reconnaissance

Attachment:  
Subject paper

Copies 2, 3	State TCO
4	DIA <span style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 150px; height: 1.2em; vertical-align: middle;"></span>
5, 6, 7, 8	DIA TCO
9, 10	OACSI TCO
11, 12	ONI TCO
13, 14, 15, 16	AFNIN TCO
17, 18	NSA TCO
19, 20, 21	NRO TCO

25X1

25X1

~~TOP SECRET~~

TOP SECRET

COMOR-D-13/39

Revised

25X1

From: Navy Member, Committee on Overhead Reconnaissance

To: Chairman, Committee on Overhead Reconnaissance

Subj: Sea Surveillance by Satellite

Ref: (a) NAVY COMOR Member letter [redacted] of 1 March 1965 25X1

1. For some time the Navy has been studying in cooperation with other agencies the problems of worldwide sea surveillance. It has been concluded that it is feasible to contribute uniquely to sea surveillance by earth satellite vehicles, and that necessary capabilities might be incorporated into programs presently under consideration. Before funds are expended for development and adaptation of capability for sea surveillance, the intelligence requirement for such a capability must have USIB approval.

2. While the general threat from missile launching submarines and surface ships at sea is easy to recognize, there are also other national intelligence requirements for current position and identification data on other ships and craft engaged in military, intelligence collection, or clandestine activities. Under conditions of cold war the movement of such less obviously identifiable threats may be of particular national and military concern, because they may be indicators. The extensive operations to locate and identify Soviet missile-transporting merchant ships enroute to Cuba in the summer of 1962, and subsequent efforts to report on suspect arms carriers elsewhere in the world illustrate national intelligence requirements for effective sea surveillance. At present most intelligence on naval and maritime movements is derived [redacted]

25X1

25X1

3. The intelligence requirements for sea surveillance include identification and tracking of those targets which can threaten U.S. forces or our allies, or engage in operations affecting U.S. national interests. They are:

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET

COMOR-D-13/39  
Revised

25X1

4. While this requirement is essentially national, it should be noted that the position, movements, and identity of all ships and submarines in a particular area also has major tactical significance. Expeditious collection and dissemination of such tactical data do however determine the effectiveness of forces in entire theaters of operations, and have major strategic consequences. This requirement should be regarded as both of strategic and tactical importance.

5. For the information of COMOR it is estimated that a satellite surveillance system to contribute to satisfaction of these requirements calls for extensive technical capabilities. Effective sea surveillance of maritime targets which can be positioned over two thirds of the earth's surface, and move unpredictably within their speed capabilities, may require means for rapid, repeated, all-weather, night-or-day location and identification of seaborne surface and subsurface targets, to distinguish specific targets of interest from among the many ships and craft at sea. Without prejudging, it is considered such a system should consider:

25X1

25X1

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET

COMOR-D-13/39  
Revised

25X1

c. Compatibility with data processing systems to permit rapid analysis and transmission of intelligence to users.

6. Since a sea surveillance requirement involves such a specific combination of elements, it is recommended COMOR submit this requirement at the earliest opportunity, even though it is subsequently incorporated in the prospective statement of other long range development requirements.

/s/

[Redacted Signature]

25X1

as revised by

/s/

[Redacted Signature]

25X1

Acting

25X1

TOP SECRET

COMOR-D-13/39  
Revised

Copy 1 DCI TCO for USIB/S  
22 TSO CIA  
23   
24-33 Asst Ops/NPIC  
34 Special Center TCO  
35, 36 CGS  
37, 38 CIA COMOR Member  
39 CGS ReqBr/ReconGrp  
40 Ch/COMOR Wkg Grp  
41 AD/SI  
42 DDP TCO  
43 DDS&T TCO   
44 C/Action/DDS&T  
45 C/SAS/DDS&T  
46 AD/EL  
47 AD/SA  
48 FA/OSA  
49 ID/OSA  
50 SS/OSA  
51 SAL/OSA  
52-55 SA(COMOR)/DDS&T

25X1

25X1

25X1